

Union Station

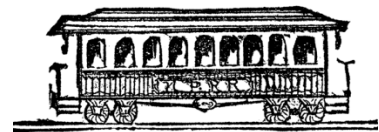
ALPLM VISITOR CENTER

The Union Station Visitor Center, located between Fifth and Sixth Streets on Jefferson Street, delivers information concerning not only Springfield area historic sites and events but Illinois tourism as a whole. Union Station Visitor Center is located across from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Another service available at the center includes on-site booking of hotel accommodations and special event packages that are scheduled across the state of Illinois.

Union Square Park, directly across the street from the museum, is the location of many free events and performances, including the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band and the 10th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment Band (both Civil War re-enactment groups); Mary Lincoln's Strawberry Party (a summertime family event); July 4th celebration; New Century Orchestra; Springfield International Folk Dancers; and many more musical performances throughout the year.

RESTORATION

- Union Station was opened in 1898 by the Illinois Central Railroad.
- Francis T. Bacon, the architect for Illinois Central Railroad, designed Union Station.
- Three sets of rails ran along the north side of the depot, and passengers arrived and departed from the platform there.
- Most visitors now enter the depot from the south side, which has little ornamentation compared to the north side. Decorative terra cotta highlights surfaces on the north side.
- The station is designed in the Romanesque Revival style, which is evident in its decorative stone and brick work, strong geometric form, and soaring clock tower.
- Original cost: \$75,000.
- Running along the south side of the building was a coach island, called the carriageway, for horse-drawn coaches and wagons. Most of the bricks are original; vintage pavers were added as needed during the restoration.
- Nearly all window frames, trim, and exterior doors are original.
- The perimeter benches and paneling on the first floor are original and made of quarter-sawn oak. The two large freestanding benches are reproductions based on historic photos.



- The second floor is made of yellow cypress.
- Originally, all the floors in the building were of tongue-and-groove strips of white maple. During a 1964 modernization, cream and black terrazzo was added on top of the maple on the first floor. The mezzanine and second floor retain most of their original maple flooring.
- As part of the restoration, the first floor that was terrazzo was later replaced with maple.
- There were separate waiting rooms for men and women; their locations were labeled in the woodwork over the doorways.
- The mezzanine and second floor housed offices for the Illinois Central and four of their railway-system partners.
- The clock tower is 110 feet tall. It is 150 feet to the top of the flagpole.
- The original clock tower was dismantled in the 1940s for safety.
- The last passenger train left Union Station on April 30, 1971 and the building sat vacant for 14 years.



- In 1985, under threat of demolition, Union Station was rehabilitated by Michael and Nanchen Scully as a boutique shopping mall at a cost of \$4.5 million.
- White and Borgognoni Architects, P.C., located in Carbondale, Illinois, completed the largest rehabilitation of Union Station. The current restoration was completed in March 2007 at the cost of \$12.5 million.

UNION SQUARE PARK

- The park was also designed by White & Borgognoni.
- The pergolas are made from ironwood, a tropical wood. The stone in the park came from Minnesota. The gazebo and pergolas were constructed by Massie & Massie of Springfield.
- In the park is Mary Lincoln's flower garden, an Abraham Lincoln standing statue "A Greater Task" by John McCleary, and a sitting Abraham Lincoln statue by Mark Luden.

CLOCKS

A clock last ticked at Union Station in the 1930s, after which it was dismantled.

The tower itself was removed in the 1940s. Union Station's original clock was made by the Elgin Watch Co. The new one, designed by the Electric Time Co. of Medfield, Mass. was custom made to match the original.

There are a few other differences between the new clock and the original. The old clock frames were probably wrought iron. The new clock faces are made of aluminum and painted black. The old clock ran with mechanical gears. The new clock is electric and use GPS satellite technology to keep time.

Other facts about the Union Stations clocks:

- Each face weighs 300 pounds.
- The minute hands are more than 5.5 feet long. The hour hands measure roughly 4.5 feet. Each number is 13.5 inches long.
- The clock uses Arabic numerals. Had Roman numerals been used, the IV probably would have been represented as 1111, which is customary for large, public clocks.
- The clock is set to chime every half hour. It comes programmed with 33 different chimes.
- The clock keeps time by receiving signals from the National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- The new clock cost \$42,000.